

Pastoral Supervision Policy

A Policy of the Archbishop-in-Council of the Diocese of Sydney

(as approved by the Archbishop-in-Council 25 March 2026)

Introduction

1. This Policy is made under clause 8 of the *Professional Practices Ordinance 2023* and establishes the minimum requirements for Pastoral Supervision within the Anglican Church Diocese of Sydney.
2. This Policy also sets out recommendations for preferred practice, beyond the minimum requirements.
3. This Policy is to be taken together with the Ministry Reviews Policy and the Professional Development Policy.

Interpretation

4. In this Policy –
 - “AAOS” means the Australasian Association of Supervision.
 - “class of persons” means a group of people defined by one or more common attributes.
 - “CPD” means Continuing Professional Development in Pastoral Supervision.
 - “Diocese” means the Anglican Church of Australia in the Diocese of Sydney.
 - “*Faithfulness in Service*” means the national code for personal behaviour and the practice of pastoral ministry by clergy and church workers, as adopted in the Diocese of Sydney
 - “MT&D” means Ministry Training and Development.
 - “Pastoral Supervision” means an agreed, regular, planned, confidential and intentional space in which a practitioner skilled in professional supervision (the Pastoral Supervisor) meets with one or more ministers (the Pastoral Supervisee) to consider together the practice of ministry with a view to enhancing the Pastoral Supervisee’s ethical practices, personal wellbeing and effectiveness in ministry and their ministry relationships.
 - “Pastoral Supervision Manager” refers to the role recruited for and tasked by the Archbishop with establishing, promoting and maintaining the Diocesan Pastoral Supervision Program.
 - “Pastoral Supervision website” refers to the website *supervision.mtd.org.au*.
 - “Pastoral Supervisors” means both Approved Pastoral Supervisors and Provisionally Approved Pastoral Supervisors.
 - “Parish minister” means a person who is a –
 - (a) a Rector,
 - (b) an Assistant Minister licensed to a parish under the *Assistant Ministers Ordinance 2017*, or
 - (c) a lay person who holds or is required to hold an authorisation under the *Authorisation of Lay Ministry Ordinance 2015* to exercise the office of lay minister in a parish.
 - “Supervision Foundations Training Course” means the unit of basic Pastoral Supervision skills delivered by the Diocese.
 - “Personal Information” has the same meaning as under Section 6 of the *Privacy Act 1988* (Cth).
 - “Synod” includes the Standing Committee of Synod.
 - “the Ordinance” means the *Pastoral Supervision Ordinance 2023*.

Pastoral Supervisors

5. An approval is required from the Archbishop for a person to be a Pastoral Supervisor for parish ministers in the Diocese of Sydney for the purposes of the Ordinance and this Policy.
6. There are two categories of Pastoral Supervisor, the requirements for which are set out in this Policy –
 - (a) ‘**Approved**’ – Pastoral Supervisors who have completed a qualification in Pastoral Supervision, and who have met the requirements of this Policy, and

- (b) **'Provisionally Approved'** – Pastoral Supervisors who have not completed a qualification in Pastoral Supervision, but instead have relevant vocational training or ministry experience (as determined by the Pastoral Supervision Manager) and who have met the requirements of this Policy. Pastoral Supervisors in this group are required to obtain a qualification in Pastoral Supervision and progress to non-provisional approval within 5 years.

The Provisionally Approved category will be discontinued from 2031. The final intake for the Supervision Foundations Training Course will take place in the first half of 2026, and no new Provisionally Approved Pastoral Supervisors will be recognised beyond that point.

- 7. Pastoral Supervisors may apply to the Pastoral Supervision Manager to be considered for listing in one of the above categories.
- 8. Pastoral Supervisors who are engaged in stipendiary ministry should first consult with their Wardens (in the case of Rectors) or Rector (in the case of other parish ministers) before applying for approval as a Pastoral Supervisor under this Policy.

Pre-requisites for Approval

- 9. To be recognised as an Approved Pastoral Supervisor, a person must –
 - (a) have completed a recognised qualification or course in Pastoral Supervision (or deemed equivalent),
 - (b) meet the academic requirements to be an associate or member of AAOS,
 - (c) submit the required documentation via the Pastoral Supervision website, as outlined on the website,
 - (d) be recommended by their minister,
 - (e) complete an interview with the Pastoral Supervision Manager or their delegate, and satisfy them of their suitability for the role, and
 - (f) be approved by the Archbishop,and be provided any information approved by the Archbishop (for the purposes of this Policy) concerning the nature and context of ministry in the Diocese of Sydney.
- 10. To be recognised as a Provisionally Approved Pastoral Supervisor, a person must –
 - (a) have completed a recognised course in a related vocation, or
 - (b) have no less than 5 years' experience in pastoral ministry, mentoring and coaching (including retired ministry workers, or ministry spouses) or other related vocations,and be recommended by their minister, satisfactorily complete the Supervision Foundations Training Course, and be approved by the Archbishop.
- 11. All Pastoral Supervisors must also declare their willingness to abide by *Faithfulness in Service* and to support the ministry of the Diocese of Sydney.

List of Pastoral Supervisors

- 12. A list of Pastoral Supervisors will be developed and published, categorising supervisors under this Policy as Approved or Provisionally Approved (see paragraph 6).
- 13. The Diocese will publish the relevant professional details of Pastoral Supervisors on this list.
- 14. The list will be available online from the Diocese as a 'live' document.

Charging for services

- 15. A Pastoral Supervisor's category (per paragraph 6) determines whether they may charge for their services as follows –
 - (a) Approved Pastoral Supervisors may charge for their services.
 - (b) Provisionally Approved Supervisors may charge a fee to cover their expenses. However, for Diocesan insurance purposes, they should not charge for their services, as they have not completed a recognised qualification or course.

16. If an Approved Pastoral Supervisor is engaged in stipendiary ministry –
 - (a) on a full-time basis, they are not to extract any financial gain from being a Pastoral Supervisor (see *Faithfulness in Service*, Standard 8 ‘Financial Integrity’). It is expected that any remuneration under paragraph 15 will be directed to their parish. It is an option also that a fee may not be charged at all.
 - (b) on a part-time basis, it is expected that any remuneration received will relate to the Pastoral Supervisor’s personal time.

Insurance

17. Pastoral Supervisors are required to hold professional indemnity insurance (or equivalent) for an amount of not less than \$1million for any one claim and \$2million in the aggregate which covers their services as a Pastoral Supervisor for the purposes of the Policy.
18. A Pastoral Supervisor’s category (per paragraph 6) determines the applicable insurance arrangements. Unless otherwise covered by another organisation’s insurance, –
 - (a) Approved Pastoral Supervisors are to obtain their own insurance,
 - (b) Approved Pastoral Supervisors who are licensed ministers and are not able to obtain their own insurance are covered by the Diocese’s insurance policy, and
 - (c) Provisionally Approved Pastoral Supervisors are covered by the Diocese’s insurance policy.

Duration of approval

19. Approval will be issued for a specified period, usually five years, and is not perpetual. The usual duration of approval will be reviewed from time to time in accordance with the review schedule of this Policy.

Maintaining approval

20. To maintain approval, Pastoral Supervisors must –
 - (a) be receiving their own Pastoral Supervision,
 - (b) undertake CPD,
 - (c) provide evidence of ongoing accreditation with AAOS (or equivalent), as required, and
 - (d) hold professional indemnity insurance in accordance with the requirements of this Policy and provide evidence of insurance on request.

Undertaking Pastoral Supervision

Persons required to undertake Pastoral Supervision

21. The Ordinance provides that the Archbishop-in-Council may declare classes of persons who are required to undertake Pastoral Supervision.
22. The Archbishop-in-Council declares that the following classes of persons must undertake Pastoral Supervision –

Commencement	Classes
1 January 2024	(a) persons who become rectors for the first time in 2024, and (b) full-time Assistant Ministers who complete the MT&D Ministry Development program in 2023.
1 January 2025	(a) existing participants from 2024, (b) persons who become rectors for the first time in 2025, and (c) full-time Assistant Ministers who complete the MT&D Ministry Development (MD) Program in 2024.
1 January 2026	(a) existing participants from 2025, (b) persons who become rectors for the first time in 2026, (c) ordained and licensed Assistant Ministers, and

Commencement	Classes
	(d) all lay persons who hold or are required to hold an authorisation under the <i>Authorisation of Lay Ministry Ordinance 2015</i> to exercise the office of lay minister or deaconess.
1 January 2027	All church workers, defined in the Ordinance as – (a) a member of clergy licensed to an office or position in the Diocese, or (b) a lay person who holds or is required to hold an authorisation under the <i>Authorisation of Lay Ministry Ordinance 2015</i> to exercise the office of lay minister or deaconess.

23. The following classes of persons are exempt from undertaking Pastoral Supervision under this Policy –
- (a) those in the Ministry Development Program,
 - (b) full-time theological students who are appropriately supervised as part of their studies,
 - (c) Church workers who are required to undertake Pastoral Supervision in another context, such as in the course of their employment as a Chaplain, and are meeting those requirements, and
 - (d) honorary assistant ministers.
24. Parish ministers not in a declared class may also choose to opt-in to this program by contacting the Pastoral Supervision Manager.

Pastoral Supervision sessions

25. The Pastoral Supervisor should not be a friend, relative or line manager of the Pastoral Supervisee. There must be a reasonable degree of separation in the relationship between the Pastoral Supervisor and Pastoral Supervisee, to ensure that there is a level of objectivity and perspective so that behaviours can be challenged. This is to be declared in the supervision contract by both parties.
26. A person who is required to undertake Pastoral Supervision under this Policy must select a Pastoral Supervisor from the approved list (paragraph 13).
27. A Pastoral Supervisee serving 4 or more days per week must undertake a minimum of six hours of supervision per annum. It is recommended that such Pastoral Supervisees undertake six to ten hours per annum. See the Pastoral Supervision Guidebook at the Pastoral Supervision website for further information.
28. A Pastoral Supervisee serving less than 4 days per week must undertake a minimum of four hours of supervision per annum. It is recommended that such Pastoral Supervisees undertake four to six hours per annum. See the Pastoral Supervision Guidebook at the Pastoral Supervision website for further information.
29. Pastoral Supervisees may undertake either one-to-one or group sessions, or a combination of both. It is recommended that all Pastoral Supervisees undertake some one-on-one sessions.
30. The costs and contributions for payment of sessions is to be determined between the involved participants.
31. Parishes will normally cover the costs of Pastoral Supervision, as part of the parish council's responsibility for paying ministry-related expenses and for caring for their ministry staff, in accordance with the *Guidelines for the Remuneration of Parish Ministry Staff* issued by the Standing Committee. An appropriate annual limit should be agreed between the church worker and the parish council.

Compliance and administration

Pastoral Supervision Manager

32. The Diocese may employ a Pastoral Supervision Manager to support the administration of the program and compliance with the Policy and relevant standards. The Pastoral Supervision Manager will report to the Director of MT&D.

33. The Pastoral Supervision Manager may receive feedback or handle complaints about Pastoral Supervisors.
34. The Pastoral Supervision Manager may audit Pastoral Supervisors' qualifications, CPD or other reasonable aspects of practice.

Compliance

35. Pastoral Supervisees must provide an annual declaration of compliance to the Diocesan Registrar in the form prescribed from time to time by the Pastoral Supervision Manager.
36. A Pastoral Supervisee's compliance with this policy will be verified at the point of licensing or authorisation, and compliance checks may also take place periodically or at random.

Records

37. The Diocesan Registry will retain a record of the declarations made by Pastoral Supervisees.
38. All information, including Personal Information, collected by the Pastoral Supervisor during the provision of sessions will be confidential except when:
 - (a) It is subpoenaed by a Court or subject to Court Order,
 - (b) Disclosure is required by law,
 - (c) Disclosure is to an insurer in respect to a claim,
 - (d) Failure to disclose would pose a serious threat to life, health or public safety, or
 - (e) The Pastoral Supervisee has given consent to disclose the information in such a manner.
39. The materials and conversations shared between a Supervisor and Supervisee are to remain confidential to those parties.

Resources

40. Church workers have access to the Pastoral Supervision Guidebook, available from the Pastoral Supervision website.
41. The Pastoral Supervision Manager is also available for advice and assistance in applying this policy to individual circumstances.

Review

42. This Policy is to be reviewed five years after its initial adoption.

Notes

1. On 28 July 2025, the Archbishop-in-Council amended clauses 23 to 25, the effect of which was to declare classes of persons required to undertake Pastoral Supervision in 2026 and 2027 onwards.
2. On 24 November 2025, the Archbishop-in-Council amended and renumbered a number of clauses.
3. The *Pastoral Supervision Ordinance 2023* was renamed to be the *Professional Practices Ordinance 2023* by the *Pastoral Supervision Ordinance 2023 Amendment Ordinance 2025*.
4. On 25 March 2026, the Archbishop-in-Council amended clause 23.

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